

Calhoun County

1. What does educational achievement mean to our community?

- Jobs
- Economic development
- Better quality of life for all

2. What is needed in our community so that ALL students can succeed? (Strengths & Challenges)

- Motivation for students to learn as they move through the upper grade
- Provide incentives for students to learn (example shared was the incentives for students to meet Michael Jordan for improved math performance. Math scores improved by 20 percents for students in a Chicago school.)
- Family literacy and training (modeling effective parenting practices)
- Ensuring what is provided to students during the school day is encouragement and quality teaching.
- Teachers demonstrating a genuine care and concern for each individual student.
- Keeping expectations high
- Need to think outside of the box – be creative in reaching students
- Schools need to better understand individual children lives – what is going on in their home/family life – and not lump all children into the same categories.
- Exciting lessons to motivate children so they can make the connection

Strengths:

- Strong faith based community
- Support from community organizations, chamber, media.
- Do not have the discipline/criminal issues
- People are willing to help “just waiting to be asked”

Challenges:

- Losing males in middle schools for cultural reason – not cool to be smart
- Parental expectations are different (it’s ok not to achieve – always get a job somewhere)
- Education is not as valued as it once was (people in the community used to watch out for children and asked about school – set expectations high)
- Single parent families and working parents (odd hours)
- Getting students excited about schools – children need to know they are special, cared for
- Exciting lessons to motivate children to make the connection
- Extended learning for children who are behind
- Utilize untapped resources in the community- secondary athletics

3. What programs, partnerships etc. work well in your community to support all students succeeding?

- Satellite reading in churches
- Provide reading subscriptions
- Trying to establish “traditions”
- Not a central community

4. What can we do in our homes and neighborhoods to strengthen our schools?

- (not listed)